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Dear PNW Tribal Climate Change Network:

Attached please find the meeting notes from our conference call last Wednesday, 5/23/2012. I do apologize the delay in getting the notes out. We had a very successful Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change conference last week, and you'll see some highlights from that in the notea. We were honored to have Daniel Wildcat and Larry Merculieff participate in last week's call and offer their perspectives and responses to the challenges and opportunities related to engaging indigenous communities in climate change programs. As such, these notes include a very in-depth discussion on strategies for tribal outreach and engagement. While the focus of our call centered on the North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative, the discussion and suggestions relate broadly to efforts within the Northwest Climate Science Center and other Landscape Conservation Cooperatives as well, and I will reflect that in the next draft of the outreach strategy document.

If you have comments, questions or edits to the notes, please let me know. As always, I will wait one week before posting them on our website so that we can make any corrections before the notes become publicly available. Many thanks to Carson Viles, one of our student researchers, for taking such detailed notes.

Also attached is the first draft of the Tribal Climate Change funding guide, that we have been working on in collaboration with the EPA Region 10 Tribal Programs office. This is very much in draft form, and we are eager for your feedback on the format and content of this guide. Some of the deadlines are coming up quickly, and we've highlighted those in yellow. We intend to maintain this document by updating programs with new deadlines as they become available, and by adding any relevant program information.

Our next call is scheduled for Wednesday, June 27th from 10 am - 11:30 am Pacific. Finally, I have included an article below forwarded by Garrit Vogesser on the first meeting to be held on the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment, which will be held tomorrow, Thursday, May 31st in Seattle. The article and meeting information is below.

Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions. Regards, Kathy

EPA schedules 8 public meetings on Pebble study

• Seattle: Thursday, May 31 - 2:00pm, Jackson Federal Building 915 2nd Avenue

Manuel Quinones, E&E reporter

Published: Wednesday, May 30, 2012

U.S. EPA launches a series of public meetings this week on its draft review of potential environmental impacts from a proposed mining project in southwestern Alaska.

The first meeting on the Bristol Bay watershed assessment will be held tomorrow in Seattle -- a meeting requested by Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.). "With thousands of Washington state jobs dependent on healthy, sustainable Bristol Bay salmon," Cantwell said in a statement, "I will continue fighting to ensure a final decision is based on sound science."

At issue is a plan by Pebble Limited Partnership for a massive gold and copper project in a watershed known for its thriving salmon fishery. Public debate over the project is focused on whether EPA should use its Clean Water Act power to block the mine even before its developers begin the formal federal permitting process.

Seven meetings are scheduled for Alaska next week in Anchorage, Dillingham, Naknek, Levelock, Igiugig, Nondalton and New Stuyahok.

The public may submit comments on the report until July 23.

EPA is working with a contractor, Versar Inc., to select scientists to review EPA's draft findings. The peer reviewers have three days of meetings in August with two meetings open to the public.

Separately, a Colorado-based public policy group, the Keystone Center, has been helping the Pebble Partnership promote a public dialogue about the project.

Keystone senior associate Todd Bryan said the group will host a series of independent science discussions in October. They will be open to the public and broadcast on local media.

EPA's study quantified the value of Bristol Bay's fish populations and found a large-scale mine would have a negative effect on salmon and aquatic habitat (E&ENews PM, May 18).

"What is most directly identified is, what you would expect, where there is a mine footprint, you would be losing streams and wetlands and habitat areas," EPA Region 10 Administrator Dennis McLerran said in a recent conference call.

But Pebble accused the agency of rushed and shoddy work. CEO John Shively said EPA's months of study using hypothetical scenarios cannot compare to the company's years of research on its mining project.

"It is worth noting that [the Pebble Partnership] has spent several years and expended significant resources studying a substantially smaller land area surrounding Pebble, while the EPA's limited time frame allocated to studying natural resources in this vast area comes nowhere near providing the science needed to adequately conduct their assessment," he said in a statement.

The National Parks Conservation Association is asking for further review of Pebble's potential impacts. NPCA Alaska Regional Director Jim Stratton said the nonprofit would be "calling on the panel of peer review scientists and other decisionmakers to factor in the proposed mine's impact to Lake Clark National Park and Preserve." The site is about 15 miles from the Pebble project.

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